

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 05553 01 OF 02 251814Z

44

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 A-01 FBO-01 SY-04 INR-10 SCA-01 VO-03

DODE-00 SCS-03 M-02 PER-05 OC-06 CCO-00 CIAE-00 SS-20

SP-03 L-03 EB-11 DRC-01 RSC-01 MMS-04 SIG-04 USIA-15

/119 W

----- 023902

R 251704Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3441

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 BOGOTA 5553

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: AGEN OGEN CO

SUBJ: REOPENING OF CONSULATE AT BARRANQUILLA, COLOMBIA

IIEF: A) 2 FAM 400; B) POST INSPECTION REPORT ON BOGOTA MAY-JUNE
1974

1. SUMMARY: I HEREWITH OFFICIALLY REQUEST THE REOPENING OF THE
CONSULATE IN BARRANQUILLA, COLOMBIA IN FY 75 PER THE TERMS OF
REF IN PARA 6 BELOW. I BELIEVE THERE IS A CLEAR NEED AND AMPLE
JUSTIFICATION FOR THE REESTABLISHMENT OF THIS POST. THE DEPT
INSPECTORS HAVE ALSO STRONGLY RECOMMENDED ITS REOPENING (SEE
REF B). SINCE BARRANQUILLA'S CLOSING JULY 30, 1971, AFTER
HAVING BEEN IN OPERATION FOR ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN YEARS, EXPERIENCE
HAS SHOWN THAT A) THE REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSULAR SERVICES AND
SERVICES TO US CITIZENS AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THE COASTAL
AREA CANNOT SATISFACTORILY BE MET BY OTHER OFFICES; B) THE NEED
FOR SUCH SERVICES IS RISING, RATHER THAN DECLINING, WITH THE
RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE REGION;
AND C) WE ARE LOSING INFLUENCE IN AND KNOWLEDGE OF AN IMPORTANT
REGION OF COLOMBIA WHICH HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN US ORIENTED.
END SUMMARY

2. THE PRINCIPAL REASONS FOR REOPENING THE CONSULATE ARE:

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 05553 01 OF 02 251814Z

A) TO PROVIDE BETTER SERVICE TO 2,000 RESIDENT US CITIS AND TO THE RAPIDLY GROWING NUMBER OF AMERICAN TOURISTS VISITING THE COASTAL AREA (30,000 LAST YEAR). CARTAGENA AND SANTA MARTA ARE GROWING TOURIST CENTERS, AND NEW HOTEL FACILITIES BEING CONSTRUCTED IN THOSE CITIES AND IN BARRANQUILLA WILL RESULT IN AN INCREASED FLOW OF US TOURISTS. THAT AN INCREASING NUMBER COME IN THEIR OWN BOATS AND YACHTS ALSO MEANS AN INCREASED NEED FOR WELFARE AND WHEREABOUTS SERVICE IN CONNECTION WITH LOST BOATS, ETC.

B) TO SUPPORT \$100 MILLION OF US INVESTMENT AND PROMOTE US COMMERCIAL RELATIONS IN AN INDUSTRIAL AREA OF RAPID DEVELOPMENT. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS DUE FOR A LARGE BOOST AS THE BARRANQUILLA FREE-TRADE ZONE CHANGES FROM A WAREHOUSE TO AN INDUSTRIAL OPERATION. THE DISCOVERY OF MAJOR NATURAL GAS RESERVES IN THE REGION BY TEXACO WILL MEAN NEW SOURCES OF ENERGY FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOR EXPORT. THE COMPLETION OF AN EXCELLENT ALL-WEATHER ROAD LINKING CARTAGENA, BARRANQUILLA AND SANTA MARTA TO VENEZUELA (VIRTUALLY COMPLETED EXCEPT FOR A SMALL PORTION NEAR THE BORDER) WILL INCREASE THE FLOW OF GOODS AND PEOPLE, AND INCREASE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES.

C) TO PROVIDE BETTER VISA AND OTHER CONSULAR SERVICES TO COLOMBIANS LIVING IN THE REGION. COAST COLOMBIANS RESENT THE TIME AND EXPENSE NOW REQUIRED TO TRAVEL TO BOGOTA FOR THE INTERVIEWS GENERALLY REQUIRED TO CHECK ON FRAUDULENT NIV APPLICATIONS. INDEED, GIVEN THE PECULIARITIES OF THE LOCAL VISA SITUATION, WITH WHICH THE DEPT IS QUITE FAMILIAR, WE CANNOT CHECK ON THE FRAUD QUESTION AS WELL AS WE SHOULD WITHOUT A POST THERE.

D) TO OBTAIN BETTER KNOWLEDGE AND COVERAGE OF POLITICAL-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN A SEPARATE, DISTINCT, AND HIGHLY IMPORTANT REGION OF COLOMBIA WHOSE POPULATION HAS BEEN US ORIENTED. AS THE DEPARTMENT KNOWS, COLOMBIA IS A COUNTRY WHERE REGIONALISM PLAYS AN IMPORTANT PART, AND THE NORTH COAST IS A SIGNIFICANT AREA IN THE NATION'S LIFE. PRESIDENT-ELECT LOPEZ, FOR EXAMPLE, INTENDS TO GIVE A CERTAIN NUMBER OF CABINET SEATS TO THE COAST TO SECURE THE SUPPORT OF THAT REGION, AND HAS PUBLICLY PROMISED ATTENTION TO THE AREA'S NEEDS, ASPIRATIONS AND POSITIONS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 05553 01 OF 02 251814Z

ON NATIONAL ISSUES. A FULL UNDERSTANDING OF THE COUNTRY'S POLITICS IS NOT POSSIBLE WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING THE COAST, AND ITS ECONOMY IS AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT PART OF THE NATION'S ECONOMIC STRUCTURE.

E) TO OBTAIN BETTER LOCAL SUPPORT IN SUPPRESSING THE INCREASING DRUG TRAFFIC FLOWING THROUGH THIS DISTRICT TO THE US; AND

F) TO BROADEN THE BASE OF US SUPPORT IN COLOMBIA BY RESPONDING TO THE VERY STRONG WISH OF THE COAST LEADERS FOR A CONSULATE.

3. COMPELLING EVIDENCE OF THE NEED FOR A CONSULATE IN THE AREA IS OFFERED BY THE INCREASING NUMBER OF REQUESTS FOR CONSULAR-TYPE SERVICES BEING DIRECTED TO THE US NAVAL MISSION IN CARTAGENA AND THE BNC'S IN BARRANQUILLA AND CARTAGENA ALMOST AS A LAST RESORT, AND WHICH CAN BE TAKEN TO BE THE "TIP OF THE ICEBERG" OF DEMAND FOR SUCH SERVICES. THE NAVAL MISSION, FOR EXAMPLE, RECEIVES FROM CARTAGENA ALONE A NUMBER OF REQUESTS EVERY DAY FOR AID AND INFORMATION FROM COLOMBIAN CITIZENS ON PASSPORTS AND VISAS; AT LEAST TWO REQUESTS A WEEK FOR AID FROM US CITIZENS STRANDED WITHOUT FUNDS OR DOCUMENTS; AND ONE REQUEST PER WEEK FOR HELP IN SEARCHING FOR MISSING PERSONS, PROPERTY OR BOATS.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 05553 02 OF 02 251833Z

44

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 A-01 FBO-01 SY-04 INR-10 SCA-01 VO-03

DODE-00 SCS-03 M-02 PER-05 OC-06 CCO-00 CIAE-00 SS-20

SP-03 L-03 EB-11 DRC-01 RSC-01 MMS-04 SIG-04 USIA-15

/119 W

----- 024160

R 251704Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3442

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 BOGOTA 5553/2

IN ADDITION IT RECEIVES A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF REQUESTS TO AID IN RECEIVING AND INVENTORYING PROPERTY OF DECEASED US CITIZENS AND FOR LIAISON WITH CIVIL AUTHORITIES IN US CITIZEN ARRESTS FOR DRUGS AND OTHER CHARGES. FOUR US NAVAL VESSELS VISITED BARRANQUILLA LAST YEAR AND TWELVE VISITED CARTAGENA. AN APPROXIMATELY EQUAL NUMBER WILL VISIT THESE PORTS THIS YEAR. THE ABSENCE OF USG REPRESENTATION BEYOND THE NAVAL MISSION HANDICAPS PROPER HANDLING AND MONITORING OF THESE VISITS AS WELL AS MISSES OPPOR-

TUNITIES FOR MAXIMIZING IMPACT. THE BNC IN BARRANQUILLA RECEIVES AN EVEN HIGHER LEVEL OF REQUESTS FOR SERVICES.

4. ALTHOUGH BOTH THE NAVAL MISSION AND THE BNC'S THEREFORE PERFORM SOME CONSULAR SERVICES, FREQUENTLY AT OUR REQUEST, THIS IS NOT THEIR JOB AND THEY CANNOT, AND SHOULD NOT BE EXPECTED, TO SPEND SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNTS OF THEIR TIME ON THESE MATTERS. NOR CAN THEY PROVIDE THE EXPERTISE FREQUENTLY NEEDED. VISITS BY THE CONSULAR STAFF IN BOGOTA HELP, BUT THESE CANNOT BEGIN TO PROVIDE AND CONSISTENCY AND DEGREE OF SERVICE TO US CITIZENS OR THE COMPLETENESS OF LOCAL VISA APPLICATION CHECKS THAT A RESIDENT STAFF WOULD. IN SHORT, OUR PRESENT HANDLING OF THE DEMAND FOR CONSULAR SERVICES IN THAT REGION IS NECESSARILY EXPEDIENT AND THIS IS NOT A SATISFACTORY SITUATION. ON THE CONTRARY, RESENTMENT AGAINST THE US FOR OUR INABILITY TO MEET ALL OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 05553 02 OF 02 251833Z

SERVICES IS BEGINNING TO GROW.

5. BOTH THE INSPECTORS AND I VISITED THE AREA, ON SEPARATE TRIPS, TO OBSERVE CONDITIONS AND DISCUSS THE LEVEL OF SERVICES PERFORMED WITH AMERICAN RESIDENTS, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND COLOMBIAN OFFICIALS. (THE INTENSITY AND UNIFORMITY WITH WHICH LOCAL COLOMBIAN AND US RESIDENTS AND COLOMBIAN OFFICIALS PRESSED US TO REOPEN THE CONSULATE WAS BOTH DRAMATIC AND STARTLING. IT WAS INDEED REFRESHING IN A WORLD MORE USED TO THE CRY "YANKEE GO HOME" TO HEAR THE PLEA "YANKEE COME BACK.") WE CONCLUDED THAT THERE WAS A REAL NEED AND AMPLE JUSTIFICATION FOR REOPENING THE POST, AND THAT IN FACT THE REQUIREMENTS COULD NOT, AS NOTED ABOVE, BE HANDLED SATISFACTORILY WITHOUT A CONSULATE THERE.

6. I RECOMMEND THAT THE CONSULATE BE REESTABLISHED WITH THE FOLLOWING TERMS OF REFERENCE:

A) WE BELIEVE AND THE INSPECTORS AGREED, THAT THE DEMAND FOR CONSULAR SERVICES FROM BOTH US AND COLOMBIAN CONSTITUENTS AND THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL WORK AND POLITICAL COVERAGE IS ALL SO BROAD THAT A FULLY STAFFED CONSULATE WOULD BE REQUIRED. A SPECIAL PURPOSE POST WOULD BE UNSATISFACTORY. THE ANTICIPATED WORKLOAD FOR BARRANQUILLA SHOULD MEET OR EXCEED THAT OF CALI.

B) THE MINIMUM STAFFING SHOULD BE THREE US OFFICERS AND SIX LOCAL EMPLOYEES (THE SAME STAFFING PATTERN WHICH IS PRESENTLY AUTHORIZED FOR

CALI). WE BELIEVE THAT THE US STAFFING CAN BE MET BY SHIFTING POSITIONS FROM BOGOTA, AND I WILL HAVE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THAT REGARD AS I COMPLETE THE IG-ORDERED PERSONNEL SURVEY. I DO NOT SEE HOWEVER THAT WE CAN MEET THE LOCAL STAFFING NEEDS BY REDUCTIONS IN BOGOTA, AND I REQUEST THE DEPT TO AUTHORIZE SIX LOCAL POSITIONS FOR

THE PROPOSED LOCAL COMPLEMENT.

C) THE INSPECTORS ESTIMATED THE FIRST YEAR REOPENING COSTS WOULD BE APPROX \$95,000 AND THE YEARLY OPERATIONAL COSTS WOULD BE APPROXIMATELY \$50,000, WHICH WOULD BE IN LINE WITH THE PRESENT COST OF BOTH CALI AND MEDELLIN. WE HAVE INCLUDED THESE FIGURES IN OUR FINAL PLANS.
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 05553 02 OF 02 251833Z

D) THE USIS BINATIONAL CENTER IN BARRANQUILLA (AND CARTAGENA) WOULD PROVIDE CULTURAL AND INFORMATION PROGRAMS FOR THE CONSULATE AS THE BNC'S DO IN MEDELLIN AND CALI.

E) THERE IS NO US GOVT OWNED HOUSING OR OFFICE SPACE IN BARRANQUILLA. BARRANQUILLA IS, HOWEVER, PRESENTLY CLASSIFIED IN THE STANDARDIZED GOVT ALLOWANCE REGS.

F) THE CONSULAR DISTRICT WOULD COVER THE SAME AREA AS PREVIOUSLY.

G) BARRANQUILLA WOULD FUNCTION ALONG THE SAME LINES AS CALI AND MEDELLIN WITH REGARD TO ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE EMBASSY. THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES WHICH WOULD BE EXTENDED TO THE CONSULAR PERSONNEL IN BARRANQUILLA BY THE COLOMBIAN GOVT WOULD BE THE SAME AS FOR THE PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO CALI AND MEDELLIN.

7. ACTION REQUESTED. I REQUEST THAT THEREOPENING OF BARRANQUILLA BE AUTHORIZED DURING FY75 AND THAT ACCORDINGLY APPROPRIATE STEPS BE TAKEN AND INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED TO THIS EMBASSY. VAKY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 JUN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: blochd0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BOGOTA05553
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740167-0140
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740617/aaaaa0ic.tel
Line Count: 257
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: blochd0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 JUN 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 SEP 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <21 FEB 2003 by CollinP0>; WITHDRAWN <13 Jun 2005 by BoyleJA, PRIVACY>; RELEASED <16 JUN 2005 by powellba2>; APPROVED <20 JUN 2005 by blochd0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REOPENING OF CONSULATE AT BARRANQUILLA, COLOMBIA IIEF: A) 2 FAM 400; B) POST INSPECTION REPORT ON BOGOTA MAY-JUNE
TAGS: OGEN, US, CO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005